



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 7, 2005

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COUNTY CONTINUES AERIAL LARVICIDE APPLICATIONS

Larvicide Helps Control the Mosquito Population and Reduces Risk for West Nile Virus

WHAT: The County continues to combat West Nile virus from the air, by using a helicopter to apply larvicide to key local wetlands known for mosquito-breeding. The larvicide prevents mosquito larvae from hatching into biting adults that can spread West Nile virus. The County of San Diego Vector Control Program is conducting the aerial applications monthly at 27 local wetlands.

County officials would also like to request help from the public in reporting dead birds, mosquito-breeding sources, poorly maintained green swimming pools and eliminating backyard mosquito-breeding sources.

WHEN: Wednesday, June 8 at 9:30 a.m.

WHERE: Mission Trails Park, Kumeyaay Lake Campground on Father Junipero Serra Trail (West of Mission Gorge Rd., Thomas Brothers 1230 - G6)
Media event signs will be posted to help media locate the venue.

VISUALS: Helicopter fly-over and application of larvicide; mosquito larvae and live mosquito-eating fish; mosquito traps; samples of larvicide granules; insect repellent; West Nile virus educational materials

BACKGROUND: Granules containing *Bacillus sphaericus*, a naturally occurring biological larvicide, will be applied by helicopter to difficult-to-access wetland areas with dense vegetation. Designed to dissolve in water, the larvicide acts as a growth regulator and kills the developing mosquito larvae. Laboratory tests and local field trials have shown the larvicide granules are extremely effective at reducing mosquito populations and do not have an adverse effect on fish, wildlife, or humans.

West Nile virus, common throughout Africa, Asia and the Middle East, was first reported in the U.S. in 1999. In California last year, 830 human cases were confirmed and there were 28 human deaths. Additionally last year, San Diego County found 34 dead birds and two horses that tested positive for the virus. While the County of San Diego has not detected the virus so far this year, it is anticipating human cases of West Nile virus this season.

For more information on West Nile virus, visit www.SDFightTheBite.com or call 1-888-551-INFO (4636).

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